

Going Sweatshop-Free: Start with Maggie's Organics

They've been selling organic, fair trade clothing since 1992.

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In an effort to make it easier to [shop for sweatshop-free clothing](#)—since that is a surprisingly difficult task—this is the first in a series of posts about companies that wear their ethical practices on their sleeves.

Not only does the Michigan-based [Maggie's Organics](#) sell [fair trade](#) clothing, but it's made with [organic cotton](#) as well. The line includes socks, legwarmers, tights, scarves, loungewear, baby clothes, t-shirts and stylish tops. They had a particularly awesome pair of socks for Valentine's Day, but they were so popular that they sold out before the day even arrived—be sure to check out their other great stuff! You'll probably recognize their label from seeing it in Whole Foods, but you can [buy directly](#) as well.

In September, Maggie's became the first apparel company to be audited for the [Fair Labor Practices and Community Benefits certification](#) by Scientific Certification Systems, which means that social responsibility has been verified in all aspects of agricultural production and clothing manufacturing: growing, harvesting, ginning, spinning, knitting, finishing, cutting, sewing, screen printing, and distribution.

Other aspects of the company that the certification covers include: equitable hiring, safe working conditions, access to health services for both workers and family members, education, and transportation services. The local NGO [Jubilee House Community](#) was involved in coordinating the production chain for Maggie's in Nicaragua, where community engagement, economic stability, and local and regional impacts were also accounted for under the fair trade certification system.

Need some [socks](#)? I know a pretty socially responsible place to get them.